

General Information

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The Election Process

For election purposes, Montgomery County is organized into election districts set by State law. Election districts are divided into precincts that are geographically determined, each consisting of a portion of the County's more than half-million registered voters. The election process takes place in a polling place usually located within each precinct. As a result, there are more than 240 polling places in Montgomery County, each staffed by several Election Judges who are specially trained citizen volunteers. Each polling place has a Check-In area where judges decide how each voter shall be served; a Voting Unit area where voters cast ballots electronically; and a Provisional Area for voters who cannot vote an electronic ballot because of questions in regard to their eligibility.

All Election Judges must attend training so they are well prepared to serve voters and work as a team on Election Day. Each team of Election Judges, led by two Chief Judges, sets up signage and equipment, follows various security procedures, and guides voters during Election Day. When the polls close and the last voter has left, the team of Election Judges skillfully records the election results and transport the documentation and equipment to the Board of Elections.

The Board of Elections staff arranges for various support elements including phone lines and the delivery of heavy equipment. Chief Judges, in advance of the election, plan for how their polling place will actually be arranged to serve voters best. The Chiefs and ALL other Election Judges assemble on the Monday evening prior to Election Day to set up their polling place. They re-assemble on Tuesday morning by 6:00 am to do final preparation. The polling place opens promptly at 7:00 am.

After the Election ends, the polling place equipment and materials are repacked and everything is returned immediately to the Board of Elections. At that point, the work of most Election Judges is over. Some may serve in the Canvass when provisional and absentee ballots are processed at the Board of Elections in the days following the Election.

Election Judges

Montgomery County requires nearly 3,500 Election Judges to field a full Election. Each polling place is assigned a bipartisan staff of a dozen or more Election Judges to process voters. At least one Spanish-speaking judge is assigned to each polling place and is identified by a special badge. In certain other polling places, additional language assistance is provided.

Qualifications

Because of Maryland law and its long history of elections, judges are recruited in balanced teams based on party affiliation. However, even though recruiting and assignment of judges takes party affiliation into consideration, all judges function in a non-partisan manner at all times.

To serve as an Election Judge, a person must:

- Be a Maryland registered voter usually residing in the jurisdiction of service
- Be at least 17 years old, meet all other qualifications to be a Maryland registered voter and have permission from a parent or guardian
- Speak, read, understand and write English
- Not hold or be a candidate for any public or political party office, a campaign manager or treasurer for a candidate or political committee, or an elected official of any jurisdiction in Montgomery County or, use their authority as an Election Judge to influence or affect the results of an Election
- Be able to work as part of a team
- Be able to remain at the polling place during the entire Election without interruption until the election process is complete

Term of Office

The term of office for each Election Judge is an election cycle which is approximately two years. The term for judges who will serve in the 2012 Elections begins in December 2011 and ends thirteen weeks before the 2014 Gubernatorial Primary Election, unless removed for cause. Election Judges are expected to serve when requested for all elections held during each cycle including the Presidential Primary and General elections and any special elections that may occur.

Removal of an Election Judge

The Board of Elections shall investigate promptly each complaint it receives regarding the fitness, qualification, or performance of an individual appointed to an election judge.

The board shall remove any election judge who is unfit or incompetent for the office.

Election Dates & Voting Hours

Presidential Primary:

Early Voting: Saturday, March 24, 2012 through Thursday, March 29, 2012. Polls will open at 10:00 am and close at 8:00 pm. (Sunday hours are noon to 6:00 pm.)

Election Day: Tuesday, April 3, 2012. Polls will open at 7:00 am and close at 8:00 pm.

Presidential General:

Early Voting: Saturday, October 27, 2012 through Thursday, November 1, 2012. Polls will open at 10:00 am and close at 8:00 pm. (Sunday hours are noon to 6:00 pm.)

Election Day: Tuesday, November 6, 2012. Polls will open at 7:00 am and close at 8:00 pm.

Election Judges' Voting

If you are assigned to work in a precinct **other than your own voting precinct**, you may **only** vote during the early voting period or by absentee ballot. If you have not received an absentee ballot 15 days before the election, please call 240-777-8550 to request one.

If you do not mail your voted absentee ballot in time, you may hand deliver your voted absentee ballot to your local board of elections **before** Election Day.

Do NOT take your absentee ballot to the polls. You will NOT be allowed to leave to deliver your absentee ballot to the board of elections.

Responsibilities

- Attend and participate in one or more Election Judge training classes scheduled by the Board of Elections. Training classes extend between two and six hours, depending upon the assigned position.
- Attend the Monday Night Pre-Election meeting which is scheduled by the Chief Judges. This meeting is **mandatory** for all Election Judges.
- Protect the integrity of the election and contribute to the maintenance of a calm, non-partisan atmosphere.
- Be prepared and skillful at Check-In procedures, help voters and perform tasks

related to electronic voting, and provide provisional voting support, all with the guidance of Chief Judges.

- Update with the recruiter: name, address, home, work and cell phone numbers, and e-mail address. Advise the recruiter of any unlisted numbers. Phone numbers and email will only be provided to the Chief Judges.
- Notify the appropriate recruiter immediately, if unable to serve.

Types of Election Judges

Chief Judges:

- Plan and resolve all polling place operating issues for Election Day.
- Manage polling place operations, security and conduct of Election Judges.
- Assure that voters are served.
- Organize the polling place set up and close down.

Note: An in-depth discussion of the roles and responsibilities of Chief Judges is found in *Chapter 3 – Responsibilities of Chief Judges*.

Voting Operations Judges – under supervision and guidance of Chief Judges:

- Maintain the integrity and confidentiality of the voting process.
- Determine the eligibility of voters to proceed through the polling place either to vote electronically or provisionally.
- Seek the assistance of Chief Judges as necessary.
- Facilitate electronic voting observing security procedures and controls.
- Provide general assistance to voters.
- Facilitate provisional voting in accordance with security procedures and controls.
- Assist with the polling place set up and close down.
- Process the voting units and print election results.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Chief Judges.

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Closing Judges – under supervision and guidance of Chief Judges:

- Process the voting units and print election results.
- Ensure the modem transmission of the election results, if required.
- Return critical election materials to the Board of Elections on election night.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Chief Judges.

Standby Judges – (Selected during the last few weeks of the election cycle and not assigned a polling place) must:

- Agree to be assigned anywhere in the County as the need arises.
- Remain available for assignment until 2:00 pm on Election Day.

Roamer – judges who are experienced and knowledgeable in election procedures and troubleshooting polling place equipment. Roamers are authorized by the Board of Elections to access the polling place to answer procedural questions and troubleshoot equipment as necessary.

Compensation

Each Election Judge is paid a stipend for training **AND** working on Election Day. However, Election Judges are compensated for attending training only if they subsequently work on Election Day. If for some reason, an Election Judge is unable to work on Election Day, there will be **NO** compensation for attending training. **Checks for serving early voting and Election Day are mailed approximately four to six weeks after the election.**

- Chief Judges - \$200 + \$50 for training
- Voting Operations Judges - \$150 + \$30 for training
- Closing Judges - \$75 + \$30 for training
- Standby Judges - \$50 + \$30 for training
- Roamers - \$250 + 50 for training

Federal and State Income Tax: For Federal and State income tax purposes, Election Judges' wages **are** taxable. That is, the Election Judge may be required to pay income tax on the wages he or she earned as an Election Judge. If the employer does not withhold income taxes from the Election Judge's paycheck, the Election Judge is responsible for reporting and paying any relevant income taxes when s/he files the appropriate federal and State tax return.

Social Security and Medicare (FICA) Taxes: The Social Security Administration has announced the coverage threshold for Election Judges for 2012. The **threshold for**

2012 is \$1,500 – the same as 2010. Earnings below this amount are **not** taxable under Social Security (*i.e.*, FICA taxes are not withheld from an Election Judges' paycheck) and do **not** count toward future Social Security benefits.

W-2 Threshold: If an Election Judge earns \$600 or more in a calendar year (including all State and county elections), the Election Judge must be issued Form W-2. Do not use Form 1099-MISC.

Integrity of the Election Process

The League of Women Voters will make unannounced visits to polling places to evaluate the election judges' compliance with procedures and their general performance. Evaluators use a Polling Place Evaluation Form when conducting the evaluations. During the visit, evaluators may speak with election judges and inspect reports but are not allowed to hinder or interfere with the voting process.

All Election Judges are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the election. Specific security requirements associated with the voting equipment and voting facilities includes protecting the equipment used and adhering to the laws and procedures so that voter totals are valid once the election ends. To accomplish this, Judges must:

- Assure security by maintaining physical control over Pollbooks and other voting equipment, blank and voted Provisional Ballots and other critical materials.
- Observe, monitor and document the activities of Challengers, Watchers and members of the media, discussed further in *Chapter 3 – Responsibilities of Chief Judges*.
- Observe all equipment for any potential tampering or defacement and immediately report suspicious activity to the Chief Judges (who are responsible for reporting such matters to the Board of Elections).
- Ensure that all Voting Units and Pollbooks are secured during and at the end of the election.
- Assertively offer assistance to voters who do not appear to be following the instructions provided.
- Assure that all equipment requiring electricity remains properly plugged in and charging. Ensure tamper tape and seals remain intact and show no signs of disturbance.
- Ensure that the Write-in voting process and procedures are done correctly, discussed further in *Chapter 6 – Provisional Ballot Procedures* and *Chapter 7 – Voting Unit Area Responsibilities*.
- Ensure that voters return Voter Access Cards.

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- Read and comply with all applicable portions of the Rules of Security Behavior document provided by the Board of Elections and signed during training.
- Follow approved procedures and do not deviate without the approval of a Chief Judge.



RULES OF SECURITY BEHAVIOR FOR ALL TYPES OF ELECTION JUDGES

This form must be read and signed by all judges.

2010 Gubernatorial Election Cycle

County: _____ Name: _____

SECURITY RULES FOR ALL TYPES OF ELECTION JUDGES:

1. Always wear the name tag provided by the local board of elections and carry photo ID with you while performing your duties as an election judge.
2. Do not deviate from the approved Election Judges Manual or training without the written approval of the State Administrator of Elections.
3. Ensure that all required paperwork, including the Voting Systems Integrity Report, the Electronic Pollbook Integrity Report and the Election Day Log is accurate and complete.
4. Immediately report any security practice anomalies (i.e., incomplete or missing paperwork, voided tamper tape, missing supervisors cards, or encoders (if used), unsecured facilities with election day voting equipment, etc.) Monitor and secure all Election Day materials throughout the duration of the day. Immediately report any suspicious activity to the local board of elections and record in the Election Day Log.
5. Only use voter access cards provided by the local board of elections.
6. Inspect and ensure ALL tamper tapes, seals and voting units are secure, intact and are accounted for through-out election day. Identify and do not use a voting unit that has missing or damaged tamper tape. Notify local election board immediately.
7. Do not allow any unauthorized person to touch the electronic pollbooks. A voter shall only be permitted to handle his or her own voter access card, voter authority card and/or ballot.
8. If you have a problem printing the Zero or Totals Reports, removing a memory card, or compact flash card contact the Help Desk or Election Field Support immediately and record it on the Election Day Log.
9. Ensure ALL provisional ballots are returned to the local board of elections. Secure ALL unvoted and spoiled provisional ballots, voter authority cards, and the provisional ballot bag with voted ballots.
10. Do not share confidential supervisors passwords with anyone and keep in sealed envelope until needed. Store separately from supervisors card. Do not leave supervisors card unattended or in a voting unit. Do not give to anyone other than the Election Director or a designated representative of the local board of elections.
11. Ensure ALL supervisor cards, memory cards, voter access cards, and compact flash cards are placed in the Chief Judges' Portfolio and returned to the local board of elections with all materials as instructed by the local board of elections.

I have read the Rules of Security Behavior for Election Judges and agree to follow the rules that are applicable to my duties.

Signature

Date

Polling Place Behavior

- Be courteous and respectful.
- Offer assistance as needed, both to voters, visitors and fellow judges.
- Be especially patient with voters.
- **DO NOT** put a time limit on a voter completing a ballot.
- Remain at the polling place at all times during Election Day. Arrangements for food during the day differ from precinct to precinct. Chief Judges will discuss this with the team prior to Election Day.
- Speak directly to the voter, not to the voter's assistant (if accompanied by one)
- Arrive no later than **6:00 am** in order to open the polling place promptly at **7:00 am**.
- Refer all questions that arise during Election Day to a Chief Judge.
- Open the polls on time, even if only one political party is represented among the Election Judges.
- Election Judges, especially Chief Judges, are encouraged to vote by absentee ballot.
- Strive to maintain a welcoming, calm, non-partisan environment.
- Wear the name badge provided by the Board of Elections and carry photo ID at all times. Election Judges' party affiliations must not be written on their badges.

Newspapers and Electronic Equipment in the Polling Place

The use of newspapers, cameras, and electronic devices such as radios, televisions, cell phones, pagers, and computer equipment is forbidden in the polling room. The exceptions to this rule are:

- **Voters may bring voter's guides from newspapers, specimen ballots, or campaign literature into the polling place.**
- With the approval of both chief judges, members of the media (with media credentials) may use cameras in a polling place and within the "no electioneering zone" provided that they do not interfere with the voting process and do not jeopardize the privacy of the voters.
- Cell phones, pagers, or computer equipment **issued or authorized by the local board of elections** may be used in the polling place but only for election purposes. Law enforcement officers may also use such equipment when acting in their official capacities.

Cross Cultural Communication

- Assist individuals with varying backgrounds, ethnicities and language abilities
 - Be clear and concise. Avoid slang, jargon and idioms, especially with those for whom English may be a second language.
 - Election Judges with fluency in Spanish identified by their badge are available to assist voters with limited English proficiency. Other Election Judges who speak other languages may use their language skills to assist voters as needed.
 - Be especially alert for the non-verbal language (i.e. body language and gestures) of those whose cultural backgrounds are different from your own
 - Listen carefully and patiently.
 - Speak slowly, directly and simply; be specific.
 - Allow pauses, and organize your thoughts.
 - Recap conversations and check for understanding often.
 - Use the written word as well as the spoken word. If English is a person's second language, it may be easier to read English than to hear it.
 - Recognize the person may be nervous or uncomfortable being in an unfamiliar or government style setting.
 - Recognize limited English language skills do not imply a lack of education or ability to understand; only a communications obstacle.
 - Do not speak for the voter or attempt to finish their sentences.

Election Judge Code of conduct

- Follow the Code of Conduct applicable to all judges.

Election Judge Code of Conduct

Violation of any of the following Board of Elections (BOE) Codes of Conduct may result in your removal from the Montgomery County Election Judge program.

1. Arriving late or missing the Pre-Election meeting without prior BOE notification
2. Arriving late on Election Day
3. Not working on Election Day as assigned
4. Leaving the polling place during Election Day for any reason without BOE approval
5. Leaving the polling place early and before your election duties are complete
6. Exhibiting disrespectful behavior towards other judges, Board of Elections staff and/or the public
7. Use of inappropriate and/or profane language
8. Appearing for training, the pre-election meeting, or Election Day dressed inappropriately (ex: clothing dirty, unkempt, and/or hygiene, partisan attire)
9. Appearing for training, the pre-election meeting, or Election Day exhibiting erratic behavior (ex: intoxication, drug use)
10. Failure to follow established election procedures

I understand and agree to the Code of Conduct

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Assisting Voters

- Montgomery County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Care is taken to ensure each polling place has access for the disabled and is provided with one Visually Impaired Ballot Station (VIBS), a seated voting station with various other accommodations.
- Each voter should be asked if they desire assistance. Election Judges should not assume assistance is needed or the type of assistance required. If assistance is requested, all efforts to accommodate the request will be made.
- Voters who require assistance because of physical disability or inability to read may have someone assist in the voting process provided the assistant completes a *Voter Assistance Form*. Refer to *Chapter 2 – Voters With Disabilities*.
- Children 17 years of age and under are allowed to accompany a voter as long as the child is in the care of the voter and does not disrupt or interfere with normal voting procedures.
- Voters should be referred to a Chief Judge for specific assistance. See detailed procedures in Chapter 3 – Responsibilities of Chief Judges; During Voting Hours.